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DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL ATTITUDES AND THE INFLUENCE OF ETHNIC GROUP MEMBERSHIP, SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, AND INTELLIGENCE. FINAL REPORT.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL ATTITUDES AMONG AMERICAN-BORN WHITE AND NEGRO CHILDREN, WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF PIAGET'S THEORY, WAS INVESTIGATED. WHITE AND NEGRO CHILDREN FROM FOUR NUMERICALLY DEFINED SOCIAL CLASS LEVELS WERE COMPARED, AND THE RELATIONSHIP OF MORAL ATTITUDES TO INTELLIGENCE WAS STUDIED. EACH OF THE 200 CHILDREN, RANGING IN AGE FROM 9.5 TO 11.5 YEARS, WERE INDIVIDUALLY INTERVIEWED BY THE INVESTIGATOR. THE MATURITY OF MORAL ATTITUDES WAS MEASURED BY 13 ITEMS. VARIANCE, COVARIANCE, MULTIPLE COMPARISONS AMONG MEANS, AND CORRELATIONAL PROCEDURES WERE USED TO ANALYZE THE DATA. A DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS IS PROVIDED. THE COMPARISON SHOWS THAT SOCIAL CLASS HAS GREATER INFLUENCE ON THE MATURITY OF MORAL ATTITUDES THAN RACE. NEGRO CHILDREN WERE LESS MATURE IN MORAL ATTITUDES THAN WHITE CHILDREN OF COMPARABLE SOCIAL CLASS ON TWO OUT OF THE FIVE MORAL ATTITUDE SUBTESTS. SOCIAL CLASS DID NOT HAVE AS GREAT AN INFLUENCE ON MATURITY OF MORAL ATTITUDES AMONG NEGRO CHILDREN AS AMONG WHITE CHILDREN. THE RELATIVE LACK OF CONSISTENCY IN SOME AREAS OF MORAL ATTITUDES AMONG THE NEGRO CHILDREN SUGGESTS THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS. (PS)

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INTRODUCTION

Although Piaget's theories regarding stages in children's moral growth have stimulated research comparing a number of diverse ethnic groups, the moral development of American Negro children has never been studied. The purpose of this investigation was to compare the development of moral attitudes in white and Negro children and to explore the influence on these attitudes of social class membership and intellectual functioning.

Piaget's Formulations in Area of Moral Development

According to Piaget (18), sequential stages in moral development may be described in terms of the "two moralities" of the child. The first stage in this two-stage theory is based on the young child's (4-8-year-old) unilateral respect for adults, which inspires the "heteronomous" orientation, as compared to the "autonomous" orientation of the second stage, which emerges in the years between nine and twelve. The immature stage, described as the morality of constraint, is said to be characterized by a literal, external, objective orientation toward social rules and conduct as compared to the more subjective, internalized understanding of the mature stage, described as the morality of cooperation.

Piaget suggested that there are two principal cognitive features that distinguish the heteronomous from the autonomous orientations and influence children's definitions of right and wrong: (a) moral realism; (b) the young child's sense of justice. Moral realism is defined by Piaget as "... the tendency which the young child has to regard duty and the value attaching to it as self-subsistent and independent of the mind, as imposing itself regardless of circumstances in which the individual may find himself..." (18, p. 111). This definition implies a view of moral rules as fixed, eternal, absolute entities rather than as psychosocial expectations, which typify the more mature stage. Justice concepts entering into the young child's definitions of right and wrong include retributive justice and immanent justice. In both of these areas, Piaget suggests, the heteronomous and autonomous orientations are differentiated by the young child's belief in severe, expiatory punishment as a moral necessity as compared to the older child's belief in punishment by reciprocity or restitutive justice.

Research Related to Piaget's Formulations

Piaget's concept of two stages in moral development was based upon his observations of age changes in eleven different aspects of development of moral judgment. According to Kohlberg (11), research findings subsequent to Piaget's indicate that six of the eleven aspects of moral judgment which Piaget studied may be regarded as defining genuine developmental dimensions in that they increase regularly with age, regardless of socio-cultural factors, although there is strong

indication that both cognitive development and socio-cultural factors influence rate of change. A greater decrease in the immature orientation in moral judgment among American white children of relatively higher social classes has been reported by Boehm (3), Kohlberg (12), and Lerner (13). Both Boehm and Kohlberg reported social class as being more influential than psychometric intelligence.

Cultural value orientations, such as those of several Southwest Indian sub-cultures, were found to have influenced maturity of moral judgment differentially by Havighurst and Neugarten (9). Both Liu (14), comparing Chinese-American children to white American children, and Gersten (7), comparing Hasidic private school children to Jewish public school children, found maturity of moral judgment to have been influenced by ethnic group membership.

The interrelationship of the different aspects, or dimensions, of moral judgment, has been studied by several investigators who employed written questionnaires. MacRae's (15) findings indicated that the areas studied did not represent an unidimensional factor to the extent that Piaget's hypotheses suggested. Johnson (10), on the other hand, reported positive relationships between, as well as within, five moral judgment areas.

Socio-cultural Factors Relating to Comparisons of White and Negro Children

The complex relationship existing among the variables of race, social class, and psychometric intelligence has been described by Anastasi (1). Although no research has so far been reported in the development of moral attitudes among American Negro children, research findings concerning the variables described by Anastasi, as well as by other writers, suggested what interrelationships might be expected in the present study.

Evidence for the positive relationship of psychometric intelligence and social class, accumulated over the past 35 years, is based preponderantly on white samples. Terman and Oden (21) and Havighurst (8), as well as Anastasi (1), have reported disproportionate numbers of intellectually gifted children as coming from homes in the upper professional and business occupational groups.

Research concerning the intellectual functioning of Negro children has focused, generally, on comparisons of Negro and white children and on the functioning of the disadvantaged Negro child. Controlling for social class in three social class levels, Deutsch and Brown (5) reported differences between IQ scores of white and Negro children as well as a linear relationship between social class and IQ performance for both racial groups. They suggested that racial membership tended to become increasingly manifest as social class level increased. Anastasi (1) also noted that the differences in intelligence

test scores among occupational classes tended to be smaller for Negro than for white children. Among the socio-cultural factors militating against the educational attainment of the disadvantaged Negro child, the poor preparation with which the lower-class child typically enters the school situation was emphasized by Deutsch (4). Ausubel and Ausubel (2) noted the severe disadvantage suffered by the lower-class Negro child in terms of negative self-esteem and self-image.

Problem and Statement of Hypotheses

The primary objective of the present study was to compare maturity of moral attitudes between white and Negro children of comparable age and socioeconomic status. A secondary objective was to investigate the relationship of maturity of moral attitudes to intellectual functioning. In consideration of the research findings cited above, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

1. White children are more mature in moral attitudes than Negro children of similar social class.

2. Both white and Negro children of higher social class groups are more mature in moral attitudes than children of lower social class groups.

3. There is a positive relationship between maturity of moral attitudes and intellectual functioning.

METHOD

Subjects

This research studied 200 American-born white and Negro boys, 100 in each racial group, between the ages of $9\frac{1}{2}$ and $11\frac{1}{2}$. The mean age of all subjects was 10.55; of white subjects, 10.58; and of Negro subjects, 10.53. Subjects were drawn chiefly from public school populations, grades 4, 5, and 6. A total of 170 subjects were interviewed in public schools from three participating school systems located in the Metropolitan New York area. Since it was not possible adequately to represent the higher socioeconomic levels from public school populations, especially among the Negro subjects, it was necessary to contact individual families and to interview a total of 30 subjects in their homes. Children in this group attended private as well as public schools. Age was the only basis of selection for approximately 130 subjects. After this portion of the sample had been completed, it was necessary to screen subjects for the remainder of the sample for race and socioeconomic status, as well as for age, before interviewing them.

The complete sample was distributed in eight racial-socioeconomic (SES) groups as follows:

	SES I	SES II	SES III	SES IV
White	25	25	25	25
Negro	25	25	25	25

Design and Procedure

The present study focused on a developmentally intermediate age level in the maturity of moral attitudes. The age range investigated was one which previous research indicated can be regarded as representing a developmental level occurring approximately between the immature and mature orientations. It was assumed that the two orientations would tend to manifest themselves differently in children of approximately the same age whose social and cultural backgrounds differed in racial membership and socioeconomic status. Focusing on the intermediate age level offered advantages in the exploration of the social class variable, which previous research suggested was a complex one when study of the two races is involved. By studying relatively large groups of children at this age level, it was assumed that the effect of race and social class on the mature and immature orientations of moral attitudes could be most thoroughly explored.

The socioeconomic status (SES) of each subject was established on the basis of the father's occupation, using a seven-level occupational scale based on Warner (22), in which level one represented the highest status. The four SES groups were defined as follows:

SES Group	SES Occupational Scale
SES I	Levels 1 and 2
SES II	Levels 3 and 4
SES III	Levels 5 and 6
SES IV	Level 7

All data were obtained by the investigator in individual tape-recorded interviews. Level of intellectual functioning (IQ) was determined by administration of the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) Vocabulary Test (23). The developmental level of functioning in moral attitudes was determined by the administration of a structured interview.

Measurement of Moral Attitudes

The structured interview for measuring moral attitudes consisted of thirteen items, many of which were identical to those used by Piaget (18). The dimensions of moral judgment comprehended in the

interview were among the six aspects of moral judgment which previous research had supported as representing genuine developmental dimensions. Based on the inquiry associated with the thirteen items, each subject received a score on five moral attitude subtests, as follows:

Subtest 1: Consequences vs. Intentions (CI)

Subtest 2: Immanent Punishment (IP)

Subtest 3: Solutions to Transgression: Non-Punitive Solutions (NP)

Subtest 4: Solutions to Transgression: Physical Punishment (PP)

Subtest 5: Meaning of Rules (RU)

The following stories and questions provide examples of how the five moral attitude subtest scores were derived:

Cup Story

Henry tried to get some cookies off the shelf one day when his mother was out. He got a chair, climbed up and stretched his arm, but the cookies were too high and he couldn't reach them. While he was trying to get them, he knocked over a cup. The cup fell down and broke.

John is in his room. He is called into the dining room for dinner. Behind the dining room door there was a chair, and on the chair there was a tray with fifteen cups on it. He goes in, the door knocks against the tray, and bang go the fifteen cups. They all break.

Question #1: Did one boy do something worse than the other boy? Who? Why?

Question #2: If you were Henry's (or John's) parent what would you do?

Toy Story

Alice asked her mother to buy her a new toy. Her mother told her that she had enough toys already, and that she didn't want to give her money to buy a new toy. But Alice wanted the toy, so when her mother was not looking, she took some money out of her mother's purse and bought the toy. The next day Alice became sick and had to stay in bed.

Question #1: If Alice had not taken the money from her mother's purse, would she have become sick?

Question #2: If you were Alice's mother what would you do?

Rules Question

If you wanted to explain to someone why he should not copy from someone else on a test, what would you tell him?

Subtest 1 (CI): A response to Question 1 (cup story) that John had done something worse because he had broken more cups was scored as "immature" and regarded as an expression of the heteronomous orientation insofar as it failed to recognise the significance of intentions in behavior. Five pairs of stories of this type. The purpose of this subtest was to determine whether a subject made a moral judgment in terms of the intentions which motivated an act or whether he considered only the manifest outcome of an act.

Subtest 2 (IP): A response to Question 1 (toy story) that Alice got sick because of having taken the money was scored as "immature" and regarded as an expression of the heteronomous orientation insofar as it implied that the subject perceived the relationship between violations of rules and subsequent injury as having been caused by the transgression, itself. Four stories of this type. The purpose of this subtest was to determine whether or not the subject perceived the relationship between violations of rules and subsequent injury as punishment.

Subtest 3 (NP): Any response to Question 2 of the cup and toy stories favoring some form of explanation, restitution, or apology was classified as "non-punitive" and regarded as expressing the mature, autonomous orientation. Responses were initially classified into 12 categories, 5 of which were "non-punitive" or "mature;" 7 of which were "punitive" or "immature." Nine questions of this type. The purpose of this subtest was to elicit the subject's concept concerning the means of preventing or eliminating non-conforming behavior.

Subtest 4 (PP): "Physical Punishment" was one of the 7 "punitive," or "immature," categories to Question 2 (cup and toy stories), as described above. The number of physical punishment responses was totaled for each subject. The purpose of this subtest was to assess the subject's tendency to make choices in favor of extreme, painful punishment.

Subtest 5 (RU): A response citing discovery of the transgression followed by punishment was scored as "immature" and regarded as expressing the heteronomous orientation insofar as it implied acceptance of

rules because of fear of punitive consequences rather than internalized needs and the principle of mutual trust. Four questions of this type. The purpose of this subtest was to assess the subject's understanding of the purpose and meaning of rules set by society: whether or not he was relatively independent of sanctions in his orientation.

To summarize, each of the five subtest scores represented the total number of mature responses for that subtest. The higher the score, the more mature the response for Subtests 1, 2, 3, and 5. On Subtest 4 (PP), the lower the total score, the more mature the response. The two Solutions to Transgression scores were intended to represent the least punitive orientation (NP) and the most punitive orientation (PP).

The reliability of the subtests of the interview was reported in a previous study (20). Test-retest correlations, based on 20 subjects, ranged from .69 to .89 for the various subtests. The reliability of the classification of the responses on the five subtests of the present study was checked by comparing the classification of the investigator with that of another judge on a random sample of 30 protocols--15 white children and 15 Negro children. Percentage of interjudge agreement ranged from 93% to 100% on the five subtests.

Data Analysis

A two-way analysis of variance was employed on the five moral attitude subtests to test the significance of differences between and among the eight racial-SES groups. This analysis pertained to the first two hypotheses. The third hypothesis was tested by a multiple correlation of the five moral attitude subtests to the WISC Vocabulary Test.

Supplementary analyses were employed to explore further the results relating to the hypotheses of the study. One set of these analyses was designed to investigate the influence of intellectual differences between the two racial groups on the dimensions of moral attitudes that were studied. Therefore, an analysis of variance of WISC Vocabulary scores was computed. Analyses of covariance, controlling for intelligence, of several of the moral attitude subtests were also employed.

A number of correlational relationships not directly related to the hypotheses were also included in the supplementary analyses.

RESULTS

Results Relating to the Hypotheses

> Hypothesis 1: White children are more mature in moral attitudes than Negro children of similar social class.

This hypothesis was confirmed on only two of the five moral attitude subtests. It was concluded, therefore, that white children are more mature than Negro children only on Subtest 2 (IP) and on Subtest 4 (PP). Table 1, which presents the analysis of variance of moral attitude subtests by race (A), shows a significant difference between white and Negro children on IP ($F = 6.1$, $p < .05$) and on PP ($F = 3.9$, $p < .05$).

> Hypothesis 2: Both white and Negro children of higher social class groups are more mature in moral attitudes than children of lower social class groups.

This hypothesis was confirmed on all five moral attitude subtests. It was concluded, therefore, that both white and Negro children of higher social class groups are more mature in moral attitudes than children of lower social class groups. The analysis of variance of the five moral attitude subtests by SES (B) also appears in Table 1, which shows that the difference among SES groups was significant on all five subtests ($p < .01$ on four subtests; $p < .05$ on one subtest). Interactions for race (A) and SES (B) were significant on only two subtests: NP and PP (both $F = 2.7$, $p < .05$).

The relationship between maturity of moral attitudes and SES was, generally, in the anticipated direction of positive linearity. Table 2 presents means for the eight racial-SES groups on the five moral attitude subtests and the WISC Vocabulary. To explore further the differences among SES groups, a comparison test of SES means, based on Dunn's method (6), was used. This resulted in significant differences between SES I and SES IV on all five moral attitude subtests for the white group. Significant differences between SES I and SES IV appeared in the Negro group only on Subtest 1 (CI) and Subtest 2 (IP). In addition, it may be noted, there were significant differences in the white group between SES I and SES III on Subtest 3 (NP) and between SES III and SES IV on Subtest 4 (PP). In all, there was a total of nine significant comparisons observed through the use of the Dunn multiple comparison test using SES means.

> Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between maturity of moral attitudes and intellectual functioning.

This hypothesis was confirmed. The multiple correlation coefficient of the five moral attitude subtests to the WISC Vocabulary

Table 1

Analysis of Variance of Moral Attitude Subtests and

WISC Vocabulary by Race (A) and SES (B)

(N = 200)

		Moral Attitude Subtests										WISC Vocabulary	
		1. CI		2. IP		3. NP		4. PP		5. RU			
Source	df	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F	MS	F
A	1	.3	.2	11.5	6.1*	1.8	.4	9.7	3.9*	2.6	2.2	61.6	11.7**
B	3	19.0	11.9**	20.9	11.0**	18.5	3.9**	8.9	3.6*	7.4	6.1**	325.1	61.5**
A X B	3	1.0	.6	.1	.1	13.0	2.7*	6.7	2.7*	.4	.3	1.5	.3
Within	192	1.6		1.9		4.7		2.5		1.2		5.3	

* Significant at .05 level.
** Significant at .01 level.

Table 2

Means for SES and Racial Groups on Moral Attitude Subtests and WISC Vocabulary

(N = 200)

SES Group[a]	Moral Attitude Subtests										WISC Vocabulary	
	1. CI		2. IP		3. NP		4. PP		5. RU			
	W	N	W	N	W	N	W	N	W	N	W	N
SES I	3.1	2.9	3.4	2.8	5.2	3.9	.6	1.3	1.9	1.5	15.3	14.7
SES II	2.6	2.2	2.8	2.4	4.5	3.8	1.0	1.8	1.2	.9	13.8	12.6
SES III	2.1	2.4	2.7	2.1	3.1	3.9	.8	1.7	1.4	1.4	12.6	11.4
SES IV	1.6	1.4	1.8	1.4	3.0	3.5	2.3	1.6	.9	.8	9.6	8.2

[a] SES I represents highest SES level.

Test was .49, which supports the conclusion that the more intelligent children, as measured by the WISC Vocabulary Test, are also more mature in moral attitudes.

The result of the test of Hypothesis 3, considered in conjunction with those of the first two hypotheses, raised the issue of whether or not the positive relationship between maturity of moral attitudes and intelligence might have been a factor in the significant differences which were observed both between the two races and among the social class groups. In order to explore further this relationship, an analysis of variance of WISC scores was computed, the results of which are shown in Table 1, from which it may be noted that the mean difference between the two races was significant at the .01 level. WISC Vocabulary means for the four SES groups were also computed and are shown in Table 2. A positive relationship between social class and intelligence was suggested by the consistent linearity in both the white and Negro groups. Therefore, a comparison among SES means was computed. A number of significant comparisons were observed, using the Dunn method (6). Reference to Table 3, which presents the results of the comparison of SES means, shows that, out of the six relevant comparisons in each racial group, there were four significant comparisons in the white group and five significant comparisons in the Negro group. This result indicated a slightly greater degree of SES differentiation in the Negro group than in the white group.

In order to explore further the relationship of race, SES, and WISC Vocabulary to each other, an analysis of covariance was used on Subtest 1 (CI) and on Subtest 2 (IP) with WISC Vocabulary scores controlled. Table 4, which presents this analysis, shows that the significant difference among SES groups on Subtest 1 (CI) remained, even with WISC Vocabulary controlled ($F = 3.3$, $p < .05$), but that both racial and SES differences disappeared on Subtest 2 (IP) with WISC Vocabulary controlled. These two subtests were analyzed further because mean scores for SES groups for both racial groups followed relatively consistently the direction of mean WISC Vocabulary for both groups, as shown in Table 2. This was not generally true of the other three subtests, which was particularly evident on two of them, Subtest 3 (NP) and Subtest 4 (PP), by the significant interactions, as shown in Table 1.

Additional Analyses of Data

Further analyses pertaining to unhypothesized relationships consisted of: inter-test correlations; additional relationships pertaining to moral attitude scores, socioeconomic status, and intelligence; and a descriptive analysis of age as a variable.

Table 3

Significance of Comparisons Among SES Means by Race for Vocabulary Test (WISC)

SES Groups Compared	Value in t-distribution[a] White	Negro	Total
SES I to SES IV	8.74*	6.43*	9.35*
SES I to SES III	4.12*	5.11*	4.62*
SES I to SES II	2.40	3.32*	2.86
SES II to SES IV	6.34*	6.64*	6.49*
SES II to SES III	1.72	1.75	1.75
SES III to SES IV	4.61*	4.86*	4.74*

[a] Value of 3.3 in t-distribution is significant at .001 level. Based on method developed by O. J. Dunn, Multiple comparisons among means, J. Amer. Statist. Ass., 1961, 56, 52-64.

* Significant at .001 level.

Table 4

Analysis of Covariance of Two Moral Attitude Subtests (CI and IP) by Race (A) and SES (B)

(N = 200)

Source	Moral Attitude Subtests 1. CI df	MS	F	2. IP df	MS	F
A	-[a]	-	-	1	6.6	3.5 (N.S.)
B	3	5.1	3.3*	3	4.1	2.2 (N.S.)
A x B	-	-	-	3	.2	.1 (N.S.)
Within	195	1.6		191	1.9	

[a] Race not significant in analysis of variance.
* Significant at .05 level.

Inter-test Relationships. It may be recalled that under the test of the third hypothesis above, a multiple correlation of the combined moral attitude subtests to the WISC was computed and resulted in a correlation coefficient of .49. Table 5 presents the separate correlations of each moral attitude subtest to the WISC, as well as all inter-test moral attitude correlations.

Table 5

Moral Attitude Subtests and WISC Inter-Test Correlations

(N = 200)

	Immanent Punishment	Non-Punitive Solutions	Physical Punishment[a]	Meaning of Rules	WISC
Consequences vs. Intentions	.33**	.12	-.25**	.19**	.36**
Immanent Punishment	-	.25**	-.31**	.27**	.39**
Non-Punitive Solutions	-	-	-.44**	.13	.12
Physical Punishment[a]	-	-	-	-.12	-.28**
Meaning of Rules	-	-	-	-	.31**

[a] On this subtest, the more mature the attitude, the lower the score, which accounts for the negative correlations.

** Significant at .01 level.

Excluding the -.44 correlation between the two Solutions to Transgression subtests, NP and PP, which were reciprocally related to each other, there were nine inter-test moral attitude correlations, of which six were significant. Nevertheless, since no correlation was higher than .33, a relatively limited degree of inter-test relationship among the five moral attitude subtests was suggested.

Additional Relationships. Additional correlations consisted of the relationship of moral attitude subtests to socioeconomic status, as well as correlations showing the interrelationship of moral attitudes, SES, and IQ.

The correlation of each moral attitude subtest with SES is presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Correlation of Moral Attitude Subtests with Socioeconomic Status

(N = 200)

Moral Attitude Subtest	SES Group[a] (I-IV)	SES Scale[a] (1-7)
Consequences vs. Intentions	.38**	.38**
Immanent Punishment	.37**	.37**
Non-Punitive Solutions	.23**	.22**
Physical Punishment	-.19**	-.21**
Meaning of Rules	.23**	.21**

[a] SES I includes SES scale positions 1 and 2; SES II, 3 and 4; SES III, 5 and 6; SES IV, 7.

** Significant at .01 level.

Table 6 indicates that there was only a slight difference between the use of four, as compared to seven, SES categories. The correlation between the SES groups and the SES scale was .98 for all subtests.

The interrelationship of moral attitudes, SES, and IQ (WISC Vocabulary) may now be summarized by the addition of two correlations which have not yet been discussed: the multiple correlation of the five moral attitude subtests to SES, which was .46; the correlation of SES to IQ (WISC scores), which was .68. It may be recalled from the above discussion that the multiple correlation of the five moral attitude subtests to IQ was .49. All three of these correlations were significant at the .01 level.

Age as a Variable. Since the study was not designed to investigate age as a variable, a descriptive analysis of age was undertaken before any of the analyses described above were employed, in order to evaluate the extent to which age had been reasonably well-controlled in the $9\frac{1}{2}$ to $11\frac{1}{2}$ age group that constituted the sample of the study. Means were computed for the younger and older half of each of the eight racial

SES groups. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 7, for the white group, and Table 8 for the Negro group.

It may be noted by reference to Tables 7 and 8 that the differences between the younger and older groups were slight. Although in 28 out of a possible 40 comparisons, the mean moral attitude scores of the older groups were slightly higher, as would be expected, it was concluded that these differences were negligible, that age had been reasonably well-controlled, and that the $9\frac{1}{2}$-$11\frac{1}{2}$ age range could be regarded as belonging to a developmentally similar stage.

Summary of Results

The development of moral attitudes, as measured in the present study, was related to race, socioeconomic status, and intelligence.

1. Race. Under the test of the hypothesis relating to this variable, there were significant differences between the races on two moral attitude subtests. However, supplementary analysis of the data resulted in qualifications of these findings. With respect to one of the subtests, IP, the supplementary analysis indicated that the difference between the races in moral attitudes was related to a difference in intelligence between the white and Negro children. There was no difference between the races in moral attitudes with intelligence controlled. With respect to the other subtest, PP, a comparison test of SES means within each racial group suggested that some socio-cultural factor associated with racial membership had influenced the difference between the races.

2. Socioeconomic Status. Under the test of the hypothesis relating to this variable, there were significant differences among the SES groups on all five moral attitude subtests. However, supplementary analysis of the data resulted in some qualifications of these findings. On one of the moral attitude subtests, IP, supplementary analysis indicated that the difference among SES groups was related to the relationship of intelligence to SES. With intelligence controlled, there were no differences among the SES groups. On another of the moral attitude subtests, CI, the differences among SES groups remained, even with intelligence controlled. On three of the moral attitude subtests, NP, PP, and RU, social class membership appeared to have influenced the two racial groups differently. Among white children, maturity of moral attitudes appeared to have been influenced, to a limited degree, by the relationship between the socioeconomic status and intelligence. Among Negro children this relationship did not appear to have influenced maturity of moral attitudes.

A summarization of the multiple comparison test among SES means for the five moral attitude subtests resulted in a total of nine significant comparisons. There were seven among the white group; two among the Negro group. In the white group, there was a difference

Table 7

Moral Attitude Subtests and Vocabulary Test (WISC) Mean Scores for White Group by Two Age Groups

(N = 100)

SES Group (N=25)	Age Group	Moral Attitude Subtests: Consequences vs. Intentions	Immanent Punishment	Non-Punitive Solutions	Physical Punishment	Meaning of Rules	WISC
I	$9\frac{1}{2}$-$10\frac{1}{2}$	2.93	3.58	5.40	.75	1.83	16.25
	$10\frac{1}{2}$-$11\frac{1}{2}$	3.23	3.15	5.08	.54	2.00	14.46
	Total	3.08	3.36	5.24	.64	1.92	15.32
II	$9\frac{1}{2}$-$10\frac{1}{2}$	2.08	2.54	3.79	1.00	1.15	14.54
	$10\frac{1}{2}$-$11\frac{1}{2}$	3.08	3.17	5.25	1.08	1.33	12.75
	Total	2.56	2.84	4.52	1.04	1.24	13.76
III	$9\frac{1}{2}$-$10\frac{1}{2}$	2.15	2.77	2.91	.77	1.15	13.77
	$10\frac{1}{2}$-$11\frac{1}{2}$	2.00	2.58	3.25	.75	1.75	11.42
	Total	2.08	2.68	3.08	.76	1.44	12.64
IV	$9\frac{1}{2}$-$10\frac{1}{2}$	1.64	1.79	2.91	1.85	.85	9.79
	$10\frac{1}{2}$-$11\frac{1}{2}$	1.48	1.73	3.09	2.81	.91	9.45
	Total	1.56	1.76	3.00	2.28	.88	9.64

Table 8

Moral Attitude Subtests and Vocabulary Test (WISC) Mean Scores for Negro Group by Two Age Groups

(N = 100)

SES Group (N=25)	Age Group	Moral Attitude Subtests					WISC
		Consequences vs. Intentions	Immanent Punishment	Non-Punitive Solutions	Physical Punishment	Meaning of Rules	
I	$9\frac{1}{2}$-$10\frac{1}{2}$	3.07	2.86	3.28	1.64	1.14	14.21
	$10\frac{1}{2}$-$11\frac{1}{2}$	2.73	2.82	4.82	.91	1.90	15.36
	Total	2.92	2.84	3.92	1.28	1.48	14.72
II	$9\frac{1}{2}$-$10\frac{1}{2}$	2.00	2.08	2.75	2.17	.67	13.66
	$10\frac{1}{2}$-$11\frac{1}{2}$	2.38	2.77	4.69	1.54	1.15	11.53
	Total	2.20	2.44	3.76	1.84	.92	12.56
III	$9\frac{1}{2}$-$10\frac{1}{2}$	2.09	1.45	3.64	1.90	1.27	11.45
	$10\frac{1}{2}$-$11\frac{1}{2}$	2.64	2.57	4.14	1.57	1.50	11.35
	Total	2.40	2.08	3.92	1.72	1.40	11.40
IV	$9\frac{1}{2}$-$10\frac{1}{2}$	1.28	1.09	3.18	1.91	.55	8.00
	$10\frac{1}{2}$-$11\frac{1}{2}$	1.58	1.57	3.71	1.43	.93	8.43
	Total	1.44	1.36	3.48	1.64	.76	8.24

between SES I and SES IV on all five subtests of moral attitude. In addition, there was a difference between SES I and SES III on NP; there was a difference between SES III and SES IV on PP. Among the Negro group, there were differences between SES I and SES IV on CI and on IP. In general, it was suggested that social class did not differentiate as much among Negro children as among white children in maturity of moral attitudes.

3. Intelligence. Under the test of the hypothesis relating to this variable, maturity of moral attitudes was found to be positively related to intelligence. Supplementary analysis of WISC scores indicated that Negro children were not as verbally capable as white children. With respect to differences in intelligence by socioeconomic status, it was suggested, in general, that social class differentiated about equally in the two racial groups.

DISCUSSION

Social class, race, and intellectual functioning were all found to have influenced maturity of moral attitudes in the present study. Despite the complex interrelationship among these three independent variables, which has been described by Anastasi (1), the two-factor design of the present study and the relatively large sample (N = 25 in each of the eight cells) makes it possible to draw conclusions about the relative influence of each of these three variables on maturity of moral attitudes and about how this influence differed from subtest to subtest.

Social class appeared to have a slightly greater and more consistent influence on maturity of moral attitudes than race, since, in the test of Hypothesis 1, Negro children were less mature in moral attitudes than white children of comparable social class on only two out of the five moral attitude subtests: IP and PP. Furthermore, in the test of Hypothesis 2, social class differences were found on all five moral attitude subtests. Although the results of the present study were consistent with those of previous investigators (3, 12, 13), who found maturity of moral attitudes to be positively related to social class, the degree of consistency was greater for white children than for Negro children. There were significant differences between white children of SES I and SES IV on all five moral attitude subtests, while, among the Negro children in the sample, significant differences between SES I and SES IV were observed on only two of the moral attitude subtests: CI and IP.

The extent to which the social class differences observed in the present study are directly comparable to the previous research cited is an issue that should be considered. For example, social class in

previous research has usually been defined with dichotomous verbal labels, such as "middle class" and "working class." If verbal labels had been applied to SES I and SES IV in the present study, the most precise ones would have been, "upper middle class" and "lower class." Therefore, although the results of the present study indicated quite conclusively that level of maturity of moral attitudes was influenced by social class membership, the degree of social class influence was more precisely qualified than in previous research.

A four-group numerical classification system was used in the present study because of the difficulties inherent in comparing the two races when verbal labels are applied to social class groupings. In this connection it is interesting to note that, on those subtests on which social class differences were observed among the Negro children, the differences were between the two extreme groups--SES I and SES IV--as they were among the white children. This tends to cast doubt on suggestions made by Deutsch and Brown (5) to the effect that neither middle-class nor lower-class Negroes can be regarded as representing comparable white socioeconomic levels. Perhaps, comparisons that have been made in the past between white and Negro children have used social class groupings too gross to include enough high status Negroes at one end of the continuum and enough low status whites at the other.

The positive relationship of maturity of moral attitudes to intellectual functioning, indicated by the .49 multiple correlation of moral attitude subtests to WISC Vocabulary in the test of Hypothesis 3, was quite consistent with findings of previous research among white children by Boehm (3), Kohlberg (12), and Lerner (13). The first two authors also reported social class factors to have been more influential than intelligence. This trend was observed in this study on Subtest 1 (CI), in which social class differences were significant even when WISC Vocabulary was controlled, while it was not observed on Subtest 2 (IP), in which social class and racial differences disappeared when WISC Vocabulary was controlled.

Considering the degree of unidimensionality represented by the five subtests of the present study, the findings were in agreement with those of Johnson (10), who concluded that a general factor of moral judgment appeared to be present in the five areas which he studied, but to a relatively low degree. As to the extent of agreement between specific dimensions, the findings of the present study tended to differ from those of Johnson (10) and MacRae (15), insofar as punishment concepts, as measured in the present study by the Solutions to Transgression subtests, were not as highly related to the other moral attitude dimensions as the results from these previous studies suggested. However, the outcome of the present study is not directly comparable to those of the studies cited in this respect, since Negro children were included in the sample, and their orientation toward punishment differed considerably from that of white children.

In general, the behavior of the two racial groups on the two Solutions to Transgression subtests, NP and PP, constituted the most important finding of the present study. Both racial groups followed the pattern that might have been expected from both Piaget's formulations and Piaget-derived research on the other three subtests. While the white children followed the predicted pattern on NP and PP insofar as the higher SES groups were more mature in moral attitudes than the lower SES groups, this trend was not observed among the Negro children on these two subtests. In the testing of Hypotheses 1 and 2, significant interaction appeared between race and social class in the analysis of variance on both of these subtests. A cross-class homogeneity among the Negro children was evidenced by the absence of any significant SES differences. Among the white children, on the other hand, there was a greater social class differentiation than on any of the other subtests (two significant SES comparisons on each subtest as compared to one on all other subtests). The relatively homogeneous social class tendency among Negro children is consistent with previous research in the area of intellectual functioning in which it has been suggested that social class differences within the Negro group tended to be smaller than among white groups (1) and that social class homogeneity in Negro life is related to caste status implications (5). Parenthetically, however, it should be noted that the findings of this study with respect to intellectual functioning, as assessed by the WISC Vocabulary scores, were not consistent with those of the two investigators cited above. With respect to vocabulary skills, there was slightly more social class differentiation within the Negro group than among the white group in the present study.

The behavior of the two racial groups on NP and PP suggests the influence of socio-cultural variables other than those measured in the present research. Previous investigations among white parents into techniques of parental discipline suggest that working-class parents typically employ more severe punishment than middle-class parents (16, 19). Since the findings of this study regarding punishment concepts among the white children were consistent with the research cited, it is possible to speculate that future research into techniques used by Negro parents might account for the pattern observed on the two Solutions to Transgression subtests. The cross-class uniformity was largely the result of the more physically punitive orientation of the upper SES Negro children. Does this reflect an aspect of Negro family life, generally, that transcends class, or does it reflect an attitude on the part of Negro parents about punishment, specifically? Training their children to expect and give punishment may be perceived by Negro parents as realistically related to their future life situation.

Further cross-racial investigation is needed to answer questions raised in the area of punishment orientation. There is also a need to explore these attitudes over a broader age range than that of the present study, as well as among children of both sexes. The role of punishment in learning and internalizing social norms may not only be different in

the two racial groups studied, but may have a different significance to children of both races at various age levels. Issues revolving around developmentally-linked patterns of aggression-control, sex-role identity, and racial identity may be crucial.

With respect to racial identity, the issue of the race of the investigator should be considered. This is particularly relevant to concepts dealing with punishment and authority, although it has general relevance as well. All of the Negro children in the present study were examined by a white investigator, and there is some evidence that Negro children tend to achieve higher IQ scores with Negro examiners (17). Whether or not this factor affected the responses of the present study, particularly in the area of punishment concepts, remains to be tested.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the present study support its predictions with respect to white children and were also consistently in accord with previous research along all five moral judgment dimensions explored. Among Negro children, the findings were in the direction of the predicted outcome in only three dimensions. Punishment dimensions, as measured in the present study by the two Solutions to Transgression subtests, did not follow the trend among Negro children that might have been expected from the Piaget hypotheses and Piaget-derived research. The findings suggest that the difference between white and Negro children was related to environmental factors other than those measured in the present study.

SUMMARY

The primary purpose of the present study was to investigate the development of moral attitudes among American-born white and Negro children within the framework of Piaget's theory. In view of the lack of research in moral attitudes among American Negro children, this study was designed to investigate a developmentally intermediate age level over as broad a social class continuum as possible. Because of the difficulties inherent in making comparisons of white and Negro children on the basis of verbally defined social class groupings, the study was designed to compare four numerically defined social class levels. A secondary objective of the study was to investigate the relationship of moral attitudes to intelligence.

All subjects were individually interviewed by the investigator, and all data were collected through the interview. Socioeconomic status was established on the basis of information received in the interview about the father's occupation. Level of maturity of moral attitudes was

determined through the administration of a structured interview consisting of thirteen items. Based on the inquiry associated with these items, each subject received a score on five moral attitude subtests. Level of intellectual functioning was determined by the administration of the Vocabulary Test of the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children.

Subjects were 200 boys, 100 white boys and 100 Negro boys, between the ages of $9\frac{1}{2}$ and $11\frac{1}{2}$. With the exception of 30 subjects interviewed in their homes, the remainder of the subjects were interviewed in six public schools, located in or near New York City. Based on the four-level social class design of the study, there were 25 subjects of each race in each social class category.

The data were analyzed through the use of analyses of variance and covariance, multiple comparisons among means, and correlational procedures. These analyses were used for testing the three hypotheses of the study pertaining to the relationship of maturity of moral attitudes to: (1) race; (2) social class; (3) intelligence.

The results indicated that level of maturity of moral attitudes was related to race, social class, and intelligence, but that the relative influence of these variables differed from subtest to subtest. Regarding the relationship of maturity of moral attitudes to intelligence, the results indicated a positive relationship, as evidenced by the .49 correlation between the combined five moral attitude subtest scores and WISC Vocabulary Test scores. Supplementary analyses indicated that the Negro children were less intellectually capable, as measured by the WISC Vocabulary Test, than the white children.

These results suggested several general conclusions. In terms of the comparison of white and Negro children to each other, social class appeared to have a slightly greater influence on maturity of moral attitudes than race. Negro children were less mature in moral attitudes than white children of comparable social class on two out of the five moral attitude subtests. On one of these two subtests, racial differences were influenced by the significant difference in intelligence, as measured by vocabulary skills, between the two races. In terms of viewing each race separately, social class did not have as great an influence on maturity of moral attitudes among Negro children as among white children. Social class differentiated among the white children on all of the five subtests, while it differentiated among the Negro children on only two subtests. The relative lack of consistency of social class differentiation in some areas of moral attitudes among the Negro children suggested the influence of socio-cultural factors other than those represented by the variables measured in the present study. The need for further investigation in these areas of moral attitudes was indicated.

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Do Not Grant Summary

SUMMARY REPORT
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DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL ATTITUDES AND THE INFLUENCE OF ETHNIC GROUP MEMBERSHIP, SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS, AND INTELLIGENCE

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